

REMARKS

This application contains claims 1-31. Claims 1, 16 and 31 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the interview held by Examiner Nguyen on May 5, 2004, with Applicant's representative, Daniel Kligler (Reg. No. 41,120). At the interview, Applicant presented a draft amendment to claims 1 and 16, and pointed out the distinction of the amended claims over Thadani et al. (US 5,648,965). The Examiner agreed that the proposed amendment would distinguish the present invention over the cited art.

Claims 1-5, 8-12, 15-18, 20, 21, 24-28, 30 and 31 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) over Thadani, mentioned above. Thadani describes a method and apparatus for dynamic distributed packet tracing analysis. According to this method, a packet filter is programmed by a remote controller to detect packets meeting a particular criterion and to report detection of these packets to the controller (abstract). As shown by Thadani in Fig. 1, packet filters 180 and 185 are implemented only at network end-points (such as Node A 110 and Node E 150). Thadani teaches away from filtering packets at intermediate points, such as switches 160 and 170, in locations between the end-points (col. 2, lines 1-12).

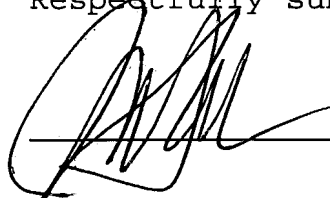
Claims 1, 16 and 31 have been amended, as agreed in the interview, to recite a method, apparatus and computer software product based on intercepting packets meeting a filtering criterion at locations traversed by the packets intermediate the end-points.

This function is performed, for example, by network agents (NA) shown in Fig. 1 of the present patent application. The locations of the network agents are intermediate the locations of traffic agent (TA) end-points, which transmit and receive the packets that are intercepted by the network agents. This arrangement is neither taught nor suggested by Thadani. Therefore, claims 1, 16 and 31 are believed to be patentable. In view of the patentability of independent claims 1 and 16, dependent claims 2-5, 8-12, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24-28 and 30 are believed to be patentable, as well.

Claims 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, 22, 23 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Thadani in view of McKee et al. (US 5,477,531) or in view of Iddon et al. (US 5,634,009). In view of the patentability of amended independent claims 1 and 16, however, dependent claims 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, 22, 23 and 29 are also believed to be patentable.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the grounds of rejection raised by the examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, a prompt notice of allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Julian Cohen', is written over a horizontal line.

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